1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

the belief that drowned persons have been claimed by the Dragon of the Lake, the recovered corpses of those who lose their life in this way are buried on the foreshore, among the willows which line the water. They are given elaborate tombs if they were fathers of a family, just as if death had not been due to drowning, but they are never buried with the family on the mountain slopes. Graves are always orientated in accordance with the instructions of a geomancer, but they invariably face the lake at some angle, and are never faced towards the mountain. The orientation of graves is believed to be intimately connected with the repose of the dead, and if misfortune falls upon a family, or the ghost of the deceased is believed to walk, it is attributed to wrong orientation of the grave, and the monument is reconstructed accordingly.

In all parts of China the Lunar New Year, which falls early in February, is the principal holiday in the calendar, and is celebrated by feasting and festivity. It is usual for shops to close, formerly for as long as two weeks, and even now very little business is done in the first half of the First Month. The 15th of the 1st Month, the last day of the Feast of Lanterns, was the old official end of the holiday season, a period which very much resembles the Christmas holidays of western Europe. In just the same way the New Year holiday is a time for family reunions, a festival in which the religious background is not so prominent as the secular feasting and holiday making. In Ta Li the Min Chia celebrate the New Year with rites, which though they may be affected by Chinese practice in the past, are now strange to Chinese visitors from the eastern provinces. These rites are performed privately in the home and are therefore akin to the Shu Pao ceremonies of Ancestor Worship described above. It is characteristic of Min Chia practice, however, to find Buddhist elements incorporated in the ceremony.

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

one does so one will contract the disease. This curious belief is universal, and great precautions are taken when travelling to make sure that eggs are from a safe source.

It is a fact that the yolk of hens' eggs is the medium in which what is believed to be the germ causing leprosy has recently been successfully cultivated in European laboratories. This discovery, which is as yet not fully confirmed, is of course quite unknown to the Min Chia, and if it proves correct will be a striking instance of popular superstition coinciding with scientific fact. The Min Chia also believe that leprosy is transmitted by flies which have alighted on a leper's sore, and later touch the skin of another person; a belief which may be due to hearsay knowledge of the germ theory. Goitre, which is very common in Yunnan due to the lack of iodine in the water, is believed, curiously enough, to be caused by mental anxiety and worry, perhaps because it mainly attacks the under-nourished poor, who may be expected to be more afflicted with worries than their wealthy neighbours. Snakebite, which is much feared, especially in the rice planting season when the workers must wade in the flooded fields, is believed to be mortal in all cases unless the wound can be quickly and tightly bound with a maiden's hair, a specific usually easily available, as the girls are at work in the field also. These cases where disease is believed to be due to contagion or infection are rare; for the most part illness is attributed to malign or angry ghosts, and the remedy is sacrifice at one of the shrines mentioned above, or the re-orientation of the ancestral tombs if it is believed that the angry ghost of an ancestor is responsible.

The Min Chia do not practise Black Magic and are unaware of its existence. A description of rites such as the making of wax figures and their subsequent destruction to compass the death of an enemy excites surprise, and the inquiry whether foreigners do that sort of thing. On the

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

787 other hand they have various rites of a magical character designed to exorcise spirits and drive out ghosts from a haunted room or house. The Sai Dser who exorcise the spirits of disease by dancing the Tiao Gur rite have already been described, but there are as well geomancers who can be consulted on the placing of graves, a function often fulfilled by the rare Taoist monks of the district or by wandering Taoists from Ssu Ch'uan. They charge a fee of from two to three dollars nickel for such advice. They are also consulted to fix lucky days for weddings and funerals, which they do by considering the horoscope of the persons concerned and the conjunctions of the stars on the appropriate day. Books of astrology, known all over China, serve as a guide for these predictions.

Fortune tellers, whose Min Chia name, "*Sua Mier Ni*," is clearly a corruption of the Chinese "*Suan ming ti*", and are, therefore, probably a product of contact with Chinese culture, are consulted for advice on sickness, and to interpret dreams. They are often blind men who earn a meagre living by this means, for the fees charged are as low as those earned by the geomancers. The interpretation of dreams is done by traditional rules, one of which is that to dream of evil is a good sign, and to dream of the death of some person is a sign of indigestion! It would seem that the interpretation follows the converse of the plain meaning of the dream. The belief that dreams are caused by ghosts or the spirits of other persons is not known among the Min Chia. Neither the geomancers nor the fortune tellers can be properly described as magicians, for apart from the Sai Dser, the Min Chia do not depend on specialised aid in exorcising ghosts. If a ghost is thought to have been seen in a room, or in some part of the house, incense is burned at the door of the room for a day or longer. The fact that a ghost has walked is taken as a sign that the spirit of the dead

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

person is not at peace about some matter, and if the manifestations continued the geomancers would be called upon to re-orientate the grave. 787

In common with many other peoples the Min Chia believe that dogs can see ghosts at all times, and the howling of a dog is taken as a sure indication that ghosts are about. It is also believed that cross-eyed people can see ghosts, though whether those afflicted in this way substantiate this opinion I cannot say, as I never had an opportunity to talk to a cross-eyed Min Chia. If a ghost is seen in a public place, such as a street, the residents subscribe to maintain a street shrine with chanting of sutras and music for a day or two, as it is considered unlucky and ill-omened. In 1938 the ghost of a certain old woman, who had been the gate keeper of the Protestant Mission and who had died suddenly, was seen in broad daylight not far from the Mission, or so at least it was alleged. The residents of that part of the main street of Ta Li where the ghost was seen then set up a street shrine, to the considerable inconvenience of wayfarers and muleteers passing through the town. 775

The Min Chia also believe in possession by evil spirits, or more strictly, by malign ghosts. There is a standard rite for exorcising such ghosts, and though I was never able to witness this, it was described to me by a Min Chia who had seen it performed. A miniature suit of clothes, coat and trousers, is made from coloured paper, and brought into the room where the possessed person is confined. The doors are then shut, and fresh peaches thrown about the room in all directions, whereupon the paper suit is thrown out of the window, and promptly burned by persons waiting outside for this purpose. The rite is performed by a member of the family, no outside person, priest or Sa Dser being called in. It was explained that the act of throwing peaches about drove the ghost to take refuge in the paper suit, and thus

1: Fitzgerald H-5 (1937-1938) AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3

553 As a consequence of Min Chia and Chinese ideas about
787 Ancestor Worship, the name of a deceased forbear or other relative is never employed a second time. A name is something absolutely personal to the individual, and in former times at least, it was believed that the character of the name influenced the character of the child. The moment of birth is still carefully recorded for the purpose of drawing the horoscope, which in turn decides such questions as the suitability of the character of the name, and the eligibility of the boy's bride in future years. For if the horoscopes of two children are not in agreement no marriage between them would be regarded as possible. While the avoidance of the name of an ancestor or relative is probably based on ancient beliefs about the influence of the name on the individual, it is now attributed to the necessity of avoiding confusion in the pedigree and in the ceremonies of Ancestor Worship such as the Shu Pao where the names of the dead are read out. European practice sufficiently proves that this is not a really valid objection.

553 The name is usually chosen by the grandparents, sometimes after consulting an astrologer, and consists either of one word or two in combination. If one word is employed all the children of that generation will be given names which are written with characters having a similar component, so that in future it will be possible to recognise at a glance the generation of these relatives. Names of two characters are more usual, though some families employ the device of alternating one character and two character names in succeeding generations, so that the father has a single character name, the son two, and the grandson one again. When two characters are used the first word is a constant, repeated in the name of every child of that generation, the second is different and serves as the distinguishing sign. Any two words which can be written with Chinese characters

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan Border Peoples AE3
Ch'iang

refusal is not expected, and approval is not asked. A primary consideration is the value of the girl or woman as a worker to the family of the groom. For this reason wives are often older than their husbands. The writer heard of one boy who at twelve was married to a woman of twenty-six. She was a fine worker. To carry through an engagement and a marriage generally costs over a thousand dollars, and often the groom's family has to borrow. Naturally every man wants a wife and every woman wants a husband, so every person gets married sooner or later. 584 [581]

In 1933 the writer was told that the custom near Tung Men Wai and Mu Shang Chai was that the groom s family should give the family of the bride a pig s head, a couple of small jugs of wine, some pork, shoes, stockings, etc. At Ts'a To in 1941 he was told that the gift to the bride s parents should be a piece of pork, three jugs of about thirty-five catties of wine, two large pieces of white bread, incense, candles, etc At Ta Ho P'in Chai near Wen Ch'uan he was told that the groom's family should give eight rolls of cloth, black or blue but not white, twenty-four catties of pork two large wheat biscuits, three jars of wine, one large wheat cake called in Chinese a Ko kw'ei, one pair of earrings, ten feet of brass wire, and one pair of putteo. There is variation in the different localities and the objects, the amount, and the value varies with every family according to the ability of the groom's family to give

The horoscope is sometimes but not always used If it indicates that the marriage would be unlucky, the engagement is not consummated, [787]

3. Marriage.

A lucky day is chosen for the wedding. Near Mu Shang Chai and Lung Ch'i Chai in 1933 the writer was told that sometimes the "flowery chair" or bridal sedan chair was used to take the bride to the groom's home, but if not she rode a horse, that on arrival two persons helped the bride out of the chair into the house, and that the bride and the groom kowtowed to the housegod, to the go-betweens, and to the friends. 585

At Ta Ho P'in Chai in 1941 it was stated that the bride rides in a sedan chair (not in a "flowery" or decorated sedan chair as formerly), escorted by her brothers and sisters but not by her

5:Graham E-5 (1933, 1941)1942 AE3 Sino-Tibetan
Border Peoples AE3
Ch 2109

the eighth moon, or the first day of the tenth moon. He dances, beats his drum, and chants his "sacred books." 793 796

2. Since the souls of people that die violent deaths become demons, their bodies are cremated.

3. Demons are enticed by the priest into jars which are buried upside down on cross-roads or near the graves of the persons whose souls have become demons.

4. It is believed that if a man or a woman has pain in his bowels or chest this is caused by a demon. A ploughshare is heated white-hot, the priest chants and treads on the white-hot ploughshare with his foot, then treads on the stomach and chest of the patient, and waves the hot plough-share over the chest and stomach, and sometimes over the back, of the patient. This exorcises the demon. [755]

5 He divines to determine lucky days—for weddings, for beginning a journey, for starting to build a house, and many other things. Priests are supposed to have no books, but some priests have a book in which there is no writing, but there are many pictures. The twelve creatures of the zodiac occur several times in the book. This is a book for divination, and especially to determine lucky days. [787]

6. He conducts funerals.

7. At Mu Shang Chai the writer was told that the priest makes connections with the Earth Vein Dragon and with the Earth Mother and tells them to protect the deceased.

8. At Mu Shang Chai it was also stated that the priest ceremonially purifies the clothing of the deceased by incantations, smoke, etc., and that he informs the twelve gods of the decease.

9. He performs special ceremonies of worship on the housetops when requested to do so.

10. He performs special ceremonies on the housetops or in the sacred groves in performance of vows.

11. He ordains new priests.

12. He performs the ceremonies of setting up new gods in the homes.

The above list is probably not complete.

5. Sacred Implements.

The implements used by the priests in worship are sacred, and are to be handled with reverence. They are also naturally surcharg- 778

Mewu

corner of the /48/ tent, which is the home of Yu-la. The fur of all kinds of domestic animals is used, and a tuft of hair is plucked out of each animal for this purpose before it is sold or slaughtered. Thus the bundle constantly increases in size. After a meal, tea, butter, and milk are smeared on the bundle of hair for the house god.

On the altar which is found in every tent stand small statues made of bronze or brass of the Lamaistic deities. The god that seems to be most popular here is called Dzam-la. He corresponds, allegedly, to Ts'ai-shen, the god of wealth (2) of the Chinese popular religion; in accordance with Lamaistic custom, water is regularly offered to this god. Another god much venerated is one that is thought of as dwelling in hell and judging the souls of the dead. He corresponds to the Chinese Yen-lo-wang. The "horse god" (Chinese: Ma-wang-yeh, Tibetan: dam-dzen) who is also worshiped in the Lamaistic temples is offered sacrifices by the sorcerers, especially when there is threat of war. He has three heads and is represented in union with its Cakti (female principle). Ts'ai-shen and Chia-shen are worshiped by men and women alike.

I did not learn anything about a worship of the heavens among the Fantzu, nor of the sun, moon and stars.

After death the soul of the deceased can turn into an evil spirit. It can descend into hell (Tibetan: nal-wa), where it is adjudicated by the judge of hell (Yen-lo-wang, Yama). But just as in China, there is a parallel belief in Buddhistic transmigration of souls, and no one is aware of any inconsistency. If a person has led a good life, he can be reborn as an incarnation (fu-yeh), if he has been bad, he becomes a woman or an animal (bovine, horse, ox, sheep). Here the belief in the transmigration of souls is sometimes confused with the belief in evil spirits into which the souls of persons who have died a violent death are transformed.

/49/ A characteristic incident had just occurred among the Mewu-Fantzu:

The t'ou-mu of the Mewu-Fantzu had a younger brother with whom he had quarreled seven or eight years before about the rule of a group of Fantzu. He had had the brother treacherously killed one day when the latter was riding across the steppes. A short time afterwards, groundhogs dug a passage behind the t'ou-mu's house with an opening inside the enclosure of his property. This was a surprising

2. Compare Wadell, page 370.

They were about 10 centimeters high and were shaped somewhat like 751
a tripod, pointed at the top. When I asked the meaning of these figures I got no clear answer. But later I was told that these figures were supposed to represent dead Communists. Symbolic corpses such as these are called lon-ma. Armed warriors gathered in the temple and while the lamas read prayers, they made threatening gestures with their weapons in the direction from which the Communists were expected, and struck the "corpses" symbolically. This magic performance is staged before every war.

Not only people protect themselves with the help of amulets; the latter are also used to protect animals. If the Fantzu are / 56/ worried about the health of a horse, they tie a bunch of ribbons on its mane. They buy the ribbons from a lama who makes them efficacious by means of magic formulas. The sacred yaks and sheep are protected in the same way. The ribbons must be of five different colors: red, yellow, green, blue, and white. They are cotton or silk, depending on the wealth of the owner.

It was my impression that, apart from the belief in obos, the 787 ●
magic influence of the configuration of the earth's surface and the distribution of water, the thing the Chinese call feng-shui, does not seem as important to the tent nomads as it does in China. The feng-shui is judged only by the lamas, for example, when a tent-site is being selected. It is considered unlucky to pitch a tent opposite the main gate of a house, a thing that can happen if one is traveling in the region of the sedentary Fantzu. The most important protection for a tent is the prayer flag. Within the tent people are careful that they do not step over the hearth when they pass from one section of the room to the other. I learned nothing about special superstitions connected with eating or traveling.

The oft-mentioned reading aloud of sacred writings by böm-bu [782]
lamas or laymen may be called prayer. Important forms of prayer 788
are also telling one's beads, and prayer flags and prayer wheels which are specifically Lamaistic. Beads can be counted any time one happens to have a hand free. In almost every tent there is also a hand prayer wheel (1) which usually lies on the altar when it is

1. Rockhill 1), page 738 f.

not in use. It is turned morning and evening by both men and women. One seldom finds stationary wheels that are turned by hand. Among the tent Fantzu I did not see any prayer wheels turned by water power or by

Mewv

In its simplest form it consists of a strip of thin, light-blue silk one meter long and about 30 centimeters wide imported from Szechuan (Ch'eng-tu). It is used as an offering, like the obo, especially in the Lamaistic religion, as for example, for an incarnation whose blessing one implores. A khadak is always an appropriate and polite gift.

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are used. Offerings include khadaks, darts (for the obo), juniper wood, barley flour, tsamba, butter, sacrificial water in brass bowls, as well as sacrificial paper which, as in China, is burned. Pictures are stamped on the sacrificial paper, for example, a horse surrounded by the symbols of the "eight treasures." (2) Offerings are also made

782 224

2. Compare Wadell 7), page 393.

to the mountain spirit before a hunt, especially when the animals to be hunted are hard to capture, for example, musk deer or gazelles. This offering is made on top of the tent, and consists of juniper wood, butter and tsamba. There is another sacrificial rite when war threatens, which undoubtedly goes back to pre-Lamaistic times, and at which lamas are never present. The warriors gather at a place agreed upon and slit open with a knife the belly of a yak, a sheep or a goat. The animal is then cast alive on a fire of yak dung and burned to death along with tsamba and butter.

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The sacred animals which wealthy people sacrifice to the spirits can probably also be regarded as offerings. For this purpose they always choose a male animal (yak or sheep), but it /59/ may also be castrated. These animals which are kept in the owner's herd may not be shorn or slaughtered; they are allowed to die a natural death. Since people are very much concerned about keeping them well and alive for a long time, they often decorate them with the above-mentioned bundles of colored ribbons blessed by the lamas. (1)

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1. Compare Hermanns 3), page 49.

Oracles and prophecies are sought preferably from the lamas. People value them differently. We have spoken above how the nomads ask a lama to prophesy for them with regard to the driving out of spirits, in order to ascertain whether in a given case this can best be done by a lama or a böm-bu. They also let a lama prophesy how to trace a criminal. The lama may say whether and

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287 when the crime can be discovered and in what direction one must
792 travel to capture the criminal.

The strange blend of folk religion and Buddhism or Lamaism is
177 expressed very clearly, for example, in the ideas which the Mewu-
777 Fantzu have about life after death. On the one hand, they worship their ancestors, and apparently believe that the souls of these dwell in some form near the tent, since that is where offerings are regularly presented; and they also fear the evil spirits into which the souls of people having died a violent death are transformed. On the other hand, the Buddhist belief in transmigration of souls, whereby the soul can be reborn as a human being or animal, is commonly accepted. Thus our above description of the odd fear of the Mewu-Fantzu chieftain that the soul of his brother may have entered a groundhog, and his subsequent decree that groundhogs were not to be shot, was probably based on the confused blend of a belief in the transmigration of souls and in the danger of spirits of human beings who have died a violent death.

353 /60/ The cult at the family altar belongs primarily to Lamaistic
778 religion. In every tent the altar is on the right (male) side, at an
177 elevation of 1/2 meter above the ground, behind the hearth and next to the place where the fuel is piled up. It is a simple, rectangular wooden box that is 1/2 meter high, 40 centimeters deep and 1 1/2 meters long. In the middle of the altar there stands a small brass statue of Buddha, with three larger and three smaller bowls of water to the left, and four larger and four smaller ones to the right. These bowls are supposed to correspond to holes in the heart of Buddha. On the family altar of a bŏm-bu there are, as we have said, also prayer books, a large Chinese brush and a row of copper coins.

262 The numerous food taboos go back to Buddhist influence. The
177 Fantzu abstain altogether from eating the meat of horses, mules, donkeys and dogs, all fowl and fish, as well as eggs. At present the meat of groundhogs is also forbidden (1). They eat the meat

1. also pork, see above, page 25.

of sheep and yaks, but these animals are not killed in the ordinary way; they are strangled, and thus the crime of shedding blood is avoided.

782 Prayer runs through the entire daily life of the Fantzu. It is usually limited to the Lamaistic formula: "Omi mani padme hum." This they mumble especially while fingering their beads and if

death. Having completed the ceremony and returned home, the tuan-kung washes his hands outdoors. Then he enters the house, sits beside the fireplace, and has his meal. After the meal, he begins 783
to make flags and cuts paper flowers. Flags are planted on a bushel. The monkey head and offerings are put in place. Chanting liturgies, the tuan-kung takes the flags and plants them in front of a straw mattress. He wraps the chicken's feather in paper and hangs it on the top of a flag; on the top of another flag, he also hangs the chicken's feather, the bow, arrows, and other things. Having done all these, the tuan-kung, chanting prayers, begins to offer sacrifice for redeeming the vow. All people gather and drink. Then they make offerings to the God of Wealth, the Sheep God, the Door God, and the ancestors. The chicken offered to the Door God can be killed and its blood is spread on the flag. The chicken offered to the God of Wealth and the Sheep God must be crushed to death. Before dawn, the host carrying the chickens, incense, candles, etc., follows the tuan-kung as he dances from the fireplace up to the roof. Up on the roof, first a gun-shot is fired. Then the host strangles the chickens. After finishing his chanting of prayers, the tuan-kung gets ready the offerings to the White Stone God, hangs a flag on a piece of fir wood, and pastes the chicken feathers on the wood. After three days, the wood is moved and planted on a good farm. The chicken feathers used in the sacrifice are thrown on the farm.

The above-mentioned practice has probably had a long history. 539
The Ch'iang have an old folk song as follows:

"The Ch'iang people worship god, and to make the sheep and
chicken vows, they hire a tuan-kung:
The sheep vow to clean the house, the chicken vow to clean
the house and the cattle ranch.
As dirt is cleaned out, all is purified and the water is clean:
The God of Heaven, the God of Earth, come all to enjoy!"

/23/ Divination-- The Ch'iang practice divination with sheep's 787
thigh-bone, egg, or white dog. First, the sheep's thigh-bone divination:

Foretelling with the sheep's thigh-bone is called tchi-pü-sze in the Ch'iang language. Very few tuan-kung know the method of divination. Nowadays only the tuan-kung around P'u-ch'i-kou in Li-fan can still teach it. However, only one out of four or five disciples may have the opportunity to be instructed. All the magic words will not be taught even to the most reliable disciple until he holds his

• 787 teacher-honoring ceremony. The sheep's thigh-bone used in divination must come from the sheep sacrificed to the Sacred Forest in the tuan-kung's own territory or from the sheep privately sacrificed to the White Stone God by his fellow clansmen. There is a definite time to take the bone. The proper time is after the sheep has been used as a sacrifice but before it is put into a pot to cook. After the thigh-bone is taken out, it is then wrapped up and carried away by the tuan-kung to be placed beside his god. The mutton is then cooked to treat guests for the sake of publicity.

The sheep's thigh-bone can be used to divine the cause of a disease, to predict fortunes, or to reveal a traveler's well-being and whereabouts. The one who requests divination holds a bunch of oats in his hand. If it is for discovering the cause of a disease, the patient is asked to blow at the oats. (If it is for a traveler, one of his parents is to do the blowing on his behalf.) He burns pine branches before the God of Fire. After praying, he goes to the home of the tuan-kung and explains to the tuan-kung the purpose of his visit. Having received the visitor, the tuan-kung first burns pine branches before his god. Then he asks his client to put his oats on the pine branches and burn them. Murmuring prayers, the tuan-kung takes a wormwood leaf (be-ru), nips it into small pieces, and burns them on the sheep's thigh-bone. The number of the wormwood pieces is fixed at three, five, seven, or nine. After they are burned into lines and marks, the tuan-kung investigates the pattern and he will learn from it the cause of the disease as well as fortunes or misfortunes in the future. He can also decide immediately whether or not treatment or supplication is needed.

Divination with egg is called, in the Ch'iang language, yué-tè-tzēe-tiè (opening the egg and see). This method is also performed by the tuan-kung to discover the cause of diseases. The patient first takes a raw egg, blows on it once, and puts it into his pocket for a while. Later, he boils it and blows on it once more. Then he states his birth time and says, "My disease will show in the egg." (If the patient is seriously ill and has to delegate someone to do it on his behalf, his delegate will speak in his own words.) Next, the egg is buried in ashes before the Fire God. After a while, it is taken out and sent to the tuan-kung, to whom the patient's condition and birth time are described. Chanting prayers, the tuan-kung takes a bowl of clean water and with three fingers, puts the egg into water. He turns the egg and watches its movement to get a general idea of the cause of the disease. Then he takes out the egg, shells it, and using

a long hair, cuts it open. By the color and shape of the egg and the amount of water in it, the cause of the disease is determined. The tuan-kung also decides how to cure the disease. 787.

Divination with wool threads-- This method has nothing to do with the tuan-kung. It is done by another kind of sorcerer called tzēē-pa-me-rū (old diviner). He has another set of witchcraft and magic words. The most important instruments are wool threads and a leather bag. The wool threads are made of lamb's wool, more than a foot long, eighty-eight in all and tied together in a bundle. Hanging under them are strips of colored cloth called be-lee-getu. The leather of the leather bag, ki-tso-wa, must be taken from the skin of the cow used in the rites of redeeming a vow. It was even stricter in old days when it had to come from Pai-k'ung-ke, the holy land of the Ch'iang. After the death of the cow used as a sacrifice to the God of Liberation in the rites of redeeming a vow, its skin is used for making a leather bag into which many things are put: grains, animal teeth and bones, carved farming tools of the Ch'iang, broken pieces of bowls, bracelets, woodcuts, wood ruler, woman's thread board, etc., each of which has a special name. Both diseases and fortunes can be divined. There is no definite time for people who ask about their diseases. The preliminary steps in this kind of divination are the same as those in the sheep's thigh-bone divination. But there is a definite time for fortune-telling. Usually it is done between the middle of the first month and the second month, and often for the whole family. Therefore, they used to invite the old diviner to their homes to do it. At the beginning, he chants loudly his magic words on the stove and displays his gods (White Stone God, Fortress God, /24/ bronze Tibetan buddha, etc.). Having set up a sacred table and having honored the gods with wine, he pours the miscellaneous articles from his leather bag into a sieve. Making knots with wool threads, he keeps on murmuring magic words. Then he unties the knots and examines the shape of the wool threads. Afterwards, he studies the relative positions of the miscellaneous articles piling upon one another or lying side by side in the sieve in order to determine the fortune or misfortune.

Hanging a White Dog to Foretell Harvest-- At Jen-ts'un in Yun-tseng-kou, along the eastern route of Mao-hsien, the custom of hanging a white dog to foretell harvest is still preserved. It is held every year during the first ten days of the first month. This is originally a part of the festival at the Tu-hsiung Temple in memory of the tribal hero of the Ch'iang in eastern Mao-hsien. People often use their

787 earnings from the festival to buy a white dog and go to the Tu-hsiung Temple at Jen-ts'un to hold a dog-hanging meeting. The dog is hanged upside down on a branch of a tree in front of the temple. Food is placed below the dog's head but the dog cannot reach it because of the distance. The dog is left to die like that. If it does not die after seven days, a rich harvest is predicted, otherwise, a poor crop.

Special Programs in the Ch'iang Capping Ceremony and Funeral Ceremony--Practices concerning the Ch'iang capping and funeral ceremonies are very complicated. However, analysis shows that they include probably only two kinds of material: one is the material related to social systems and another to religious beliefs. I will mention here only a few important points in the programs of the capping and funeral ceremonies that have religious significance. This may help us understand more clearly the entire Ch'iang beliefs.

885 Capping ceremony (or adulthood ceremony) is called ye-boo-dei-sawoo in the Ch'iang language. This is a large-scale celebration. A tuan-kung is invited as early as the eighth month to cleanse the house and expel misfortunes so as to prepare for the capping ceremony which is to be held in the tenth month or as late as the twelfth month. The length of time from beginning to end is not shorter than the capping ceremony of the Australian aborigines. When the time for the ceremony comes, there are other complicated preparations to make. All sacrifices have to go through purification. We have no time to describe those details here, but one important program of the ceremony must be described. With his relatives sitting around a fire, the one to be capped always wears new clothes. A tuan-kung kneels and holds in his hand a fir stick, on the top of which is a paper image of the ancestor of mankind. The one to be capped kneels before the ancestor of mankind as another tuan-kung, holding some mo-ngi (white he-goat wool threads strung with stripes of colored cloth) which represent gifts from the ancestor of mankind, circles it around his neck. Then, the tuan-kung all kneel down and pray, saying briefly, "Since the very beginning of the earth, there has been the ancestor who created all things and men. Although his age is unknown, he is forever existing like the big fir trees on the rock beyond the reach of axes. His descendants should also receive his protection and live as long as heaven and earth, the sun and the moon, and enjoy good fortune, longevity, and peace..."

After the praying, gifts of the ancestor are distributed among the children of all the relatives present, regardless of sex, each receiving a gift. All are happy and the capping ceremony then begins. On the one hand, the clan chief tells the history of their ancestors. On the